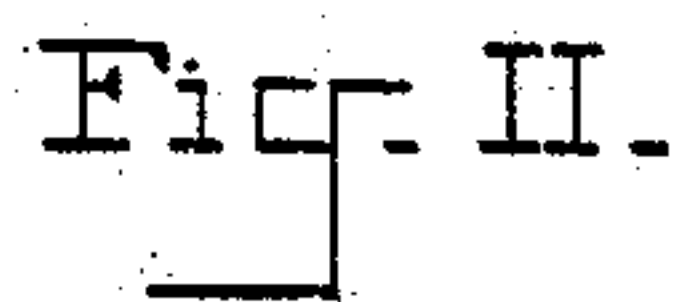


Patented Apr. 11, 1893.



Frank D. Keinan
per Wright Bros
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FRANK. D. REINAU, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

THEATER APPLIANCE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 495,205, dated April 11, 1893.

Application filed May 27, 1892. Serial No. 434,683. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FRANK. D. REINAU, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Theater Appliances, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to a theater appliance which is adapted to carry into effect in a theater and produce as a stage effect therein, a sheet of water containing additional devices whereby various catastrophes can be simulated as will be described.

In carrying my invention into effect, I employ a canvas tank and provide a centrally located pocket therein. In this pocket I arrange a false bottom or trap which can be raised or lowered as desired without permitting leakages of the water, which contrivance I utilize to produce the various stage effects which it is the object of my invention to accomplish.

Referring to the accompanying drawings which form a part of this specification:—Figure I represents a vertical section of one form of mechanism for carrying my invention into effect. Fig. II is a plan view of the same.

In the drawings, A represents a canvas tank suitably treated with linseed oil to render it waterproof. I contemplate making this tank about forty feet long by twenty feet wide and ten inches deep. The surface of the water is shown by the line $a-a$ as approximately at a level with the line of the stage A'.

At B I show a pocket preferably centrally located as regards the tank A. This pocket I make about twenty feet long by seven feet wide and six feet deep. The pocket is arranged within and extends down into a trap at the back of the stage, and in the bottom of the pocket, I provide an opening to which a hose can be attached by means of which the water can be drawn off. Inside of the pocket and forming a part of the bottom of the tank is a sinkable platform D. This platform is mounted upon and supported by four screws or pillars F one pillar being arranged at each corner and terminating at their upper ends in smooth cylinders which are arranged to feed in sockets E fastened at each corner of the bottom of the platform D. The screw supports or pil-

lars F extend through the bottom C of the pocket B and also through the platform or stationary bed plate G. This bed plate or platform is fixedly secured on supporting devices g and the pocket B being formed of flexible material will rest thereon and be supported thereby. By this means the weight of the water will be largely taken off the flexible pocket B and will be borne by the permanent platform G.

The pocket B is provided with boots or collapsible sections b which extend between the platform D and the bottom of pocket C and surround the screw supports or pillars F so that as the platform D moves up and down as hereinafter described, the water will be prevented from having access to the screw supports and by means of the collapsible sections of the pocket, leakages will be prevented. When the platform moves down, the collapsible portions will simply fold up on each other and when the platform D is raised again, they will be stretched out and assume their normal position as shown in Fig. I.

The platform G rests through the intermediate support g upon the main platform H, the latter being fixedly secured and supported upon pillars H'. The screw supports F extend through the platform H and are provided at their lower ends with nuts K, the outer periphery of the nuts having toothed gearing meshing into and adapted to be rotated by a toothed wheel J. This toothed wheel J is supported by and hung from the platform H and is of a diameter sufficient to extend between and connect with the gear wheels K, one at each corner of the machine so that as the wheel J is rotated, the gear wheels K will receive a rotary motion therefrom. The gear wheels K have central openings screw threaded through which the screw pillars F extend, the latter being screw threaded also, and the two parts being adapted to work after the manner of a worm screw or gearing so that when the gear wheels K are rotated, they will feed the screw supports F up or down according to whether they are turned to the right or to the left. The gear wheels K have smooth conical surfaces k which turn in sockets L which latter form heads for the supporting columns L'. It will be seen by rotating the

toothed wheel J the four nuts K will likewise be rotated thereby moving the screw pillars up or down and with the pillars, the platform D, the collapsible pocket *b*, *b* co-operating therewith in the manner hereinbefore explained.

Wooden rings *b'* are provided upon the boot to protect the collapsible pocket from contact with the screw pillars F. The platform D may be padded as shown at *d* to deaden any sound and is provided with perforations *g'* to facilitate the passage of water therethrough while sinking or rising.

The device which I have shown and described may be utilized in any one of the following ways: When in position as shown in Fig. I, the water is at the proper height as indicated by the drawings, and any object or objects assembled or situated upon the platform D can be made to gradually sink within the tank by the lowering of the supporting platform D. In this way people, horses, dogs or animals of any kind, ships, boats, houses, trees, wagons or painted and set scenes or any other inanimate objects may be arranged to be lowered in the water by means of the movable platform as described. By this means I can simulate any of the following scenes: I may depict a quicksand utilizing the sinking platform to carry the idea into realistic effect and may employ in connection therewith any of the objects hereinbefore mentioned. Likewise I may depict one or more ships with or

without people and may depict a collision scene and the sinking of one of the ships by lowering it upon the movable platform D. I may also depict an inundation scene whereby the sinking platform can be utilized to indicate the rising of the waters and the consequent flooding of surrounding objects, to wit: the objects upon the platform.

The above scenes may be reversed in whole or in part by raising the platform producing a contrary effect or modified in various ways according to the nature of the subjects involved. I may also divide the platform D into sections and raise or lower each section separately by separate mechanical appliances producing a variety of effects thereby.

Having thus described my invention, the following is what I claim as new therein and desire to secure by Letters Patent:

A theater appliance for producing the effect of sinking or raising of an object in the water so as to simulate a quicksand, shipwreck or inundation, and consisting of a tank A having a pocket B, platform D supported by pillars F, collapsible sections *b* and means for raising and lowering the platform D through the medium of pillars F, substantially as shown and described.

FRANK. D. REINAU.

Witnesses:

HERBERT KNIGHT,
HARRY E. KNIGHT.